
By: **Delegates Valderrama and Vallario**
Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2001
Assigned to: Economic Matters

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Technology Empowerment Zones**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring a municipal corporation or county that exercises the
4 authority to grant cable television franchises to offer property tax credits or
5 other appropriate incentives to technology companies that invest in technology
6 empowerment zones designated by the municipal corporation or county or offer
7 bundled technology services at discounted rates in technology empowerment
8 zones; defining certain terms; and generally relating to technology
9 empowerment zones.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
11 Article 23A - Corporations - Municipal
12 Section 2(b)(13)
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (1998 Replacement Volume and 2000 Supplement)

15 BY adding to
16 Article 24 - Political Subdivisions - Miscellaneous Provisions
17 Section 15-101 to be under the new title and subtitle "Title 15. Technology
18 Empowerment Zones" and "Subtitle 1. Property Tax Credits and Other
19 Incentives", respectively
20 Annotated Code of Maryland
21 (1998 Replacement Volume and 2000 Supplement)

22 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
23 Article 25 - County Commissioners
24 Section 3(a)(1) and (c)
25 Annotated Code of Maryland
26 (1998 Replacement Volume and 2000 Supplement)

27 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,
28 Article 25A - Chartered Counties of Maryland
29 Section 5(B)

1 Annotated Code of Maryland
2 (1998 Replacement Volume and 2000 Supplement)

3 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
4 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

5 **Article 23A - Corporations - Municipal**

6 2.

7 (b) In addition to, but not in substitution of, the powers which have been, or
8 may hereafter be, granted to it, such legislative body also shall have the following
9 express ordinance-making powers:

10 (13) To grant franchises as provided under existing public general or
11 public local laws; to grant one or more exclusive or nonexclusive franchises for a
12 community antenna system or other cable television system that utilizes any public
13 right-of-way, highway, street, road, lane, alley, or bridge, to impose franchise fees,
14 and to establish rates, rules, and regulations for franchises granted under this
15 section.

16 **Article 24 - Political Subdivisions - Miscellaneous Provisions**

17 TITLE 15. TECHNOLOGY EMPOWERMENT ZONES.

18 SUBTITLE 1. PROPERTY TAX CREDITS AND OTHER INCENTIVES.

19 15-101.

20 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
21 INDICATED.

22 (2) "TECHNOLOGY COMPANY" MEANS A COMPANY THAT OFFERS
23 TECHNOLOGY SERVICES.

24 (3) "TECHNOLOGY SERVICES" INCLUDE CABLE TELEVISION,
25 HIGH-SPEED INTERNET ACCESS, LOCAL AND LONG-DISTANCE PHONE SERVICE, AND
26 ELECTRICITY.

27 (B) A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OR COUNTY EXERCISING ITS AUTHORITY TO
28 GRANT FRANCHISES FOR CABLE TELEVISION SYSTEMS UNDER ARTICLE 23A, § 2(B)(13)
29 OF THE CODE, ARTICLE 25, § 3(C) OF THE CODE, OR ARTICLE 25A, § 5(B) OF THE CODE
30 SHALL OFFER PROPERTY TAX CREDITS OR OTHER APPROPRIATE INCENTIVES TO A
31 TECHNOLOGY COMPANY THAT:

32 (1) INVESTS IN TECHNOLOGY EMPOWERMENT ZONES DESIGNATED BY
33 THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OR COUNTY, INCLUDING BY:

1 (I) CONTRACTING WITH LOCAL COMPANIES TO BUILD NEW
2 INFRASTRUCTURE OR PROVIDE SERVICES;

3 (II) CARRYING LOCAL COMMUNITY TELEVISION BROADCASTS AND
4 CHANNELS;

5 (III) OFFERING INTERNSHIPS TO STUDENTS AT LOCAL HIGH
6 SCHOOLS OR COMMUNITY COLLEGES; OR

7 (IV) CREATING COMPUTER LABS IN COMMUNITY FACILITIES,
8 RECREATIONAL CENTERS, OR LIBRARIES; OR

9 (2) OFFERS BUNDLED TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AT DISCOUNTED RATES
10 IN TECHNOLOGY EMPOWERMENT ZONES.

11 **Article 25 - County Commissioners**

12 3.

13 (a) (1) The county commissioners of each county in this State, in addition to,
14 but not in substitution of, the powers which have been or may be granted them, have
15 the following express powers.

16 (c) To grant franchises as provided under existing public general or public
17 local laws.

18 **Article 25A - Chartered Counties of Maryland**

19 5.

20 The following enumerated express powers are granted to and conferred upon
21 any county or counties which hereafter form a charter under the provisions of Article
22 XI-A of the Constitution, that is to say:

23 (B)

24 To provide for the protection of the county property; to provide for the
25 acquisition by purchase, lease, or otherwise, and condemnation of property required
26 for public purposes in the county; to dispose of any real or leasehold property
27 belonging to the county, provided the same is no longer needed for public use; to
28 provide for the financing of any housing or housing project in whole or in part,
29 including the placement of a deed of trust, mortgage, or other instrument upon the
30 property to ensure repayment of funds used to purchase, construct, rehabilitate, or
31 otherwise develop the housing project; to grant any franchise or right to use the same,
32 or any right or franchise in relation to any highway, street, road, lanes, alley or
33 bridge; to grant one or more exclusive or nonexclusive franchises for a community
34 antenna system or other cable television system that utilizes any public right-of-way,
35 highway, street, road, lane, alley, or bridge, to impose franchise fees, and to establish
36 rates, rules, and regulations for franchises granted; and to provide for the leasing as
37 lessor to the State or any political subdivision or other agency thereof, or to any

1 county agency, or to any person, any property belonging to the county or any agency
2 thereof, in furtherance of the public purposes of such county or agency, upon such
3 terms and compensation as said county may deem proper, and after such disposition,
4 grant or lease shall have been advertised once a week for three successive weeks in
5 one or more newspapers of general circulation published in said county, stating the
6 terms thereof and the compensation to be received therefor, and giving opportunity
7 for objections thereto. Provided, however, that easements for public utilities may be
8 granted without advertisement.

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
10 October 1, 2001.